

REMARKS

Prior to examination on the merits, entry of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Election/Restriction Requirement

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application, and subject to restriction and/or election requirement. The Office Action indicates that Applicants are required to elect a single group among the six groups: Group I (i.e., claims 1-3 and 7-15); Group II (i.e., claim 4); Group III (i.e., claims 5 and 6); Group IV (i.e., claims 1, 16 and 17); Group V (i.e., claims 18 and 19) and Group VI (i.e., claims 4 and 20).

The Office Action further indicates that Applicants are required to elect a single species among four species: *Gelidium amansii*, *Gracilaria vetrucosa*, *Cottonii*, or *Spinosum*.

Applicants' Election

Applicants provisionally elect to pursue prosecution of Group I (i.e., **claims 1-3 and 7-15**), and the fourth species (i.e., **Spinosum**).

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7-11, 14, 16, 18 and 20 have been amended either to correct typo or to further clarify the invention. No new matter is believed introduced by the amendments.

Applicants' Traversal

This election is made with traverse.

The present invention as recited in **all** pending claims is directed to a method of manufacturing "pulp" using *Rhodophyta* (i.e., red algae) as a base material. For example, the preamble of each of independent claims 1, 4 and 5 recites "[a] method of manufacturing pulp using *Rhodophyta*." It is known that *Rhodophyta* contains gel component (i.e., agar gel). In particular, independent claim 1 recites a method of manufacturing pulp by using the "agar gel"

extracted from the *Rhodophyta*. In contrast, independent claim 4 recites a method of manufacturing pulp by using the pulp material remaining in the *Rhodophyta* after the agar gel is removed, and claim 4 recites a method of manufacturing pulp material remaining in the *Rhodophyta* after a portion of the agar gel is removed.

First of all, Applicants note that the three methods recited in all independent claims 1, 4 and 5 use the same *Rhodophyta* as a base material to fabricate pulp. Accordingly, the methods of independent claims 1, 4 and 5 are not believed deemed to lack unity of invention, and are so linked as to form a single general inventive concept even under PCT Rule 13.1.

Secondly, the Office Action indicates that “[t]he species correspond to claim 14... The species listed above do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.”¹ However, Applicants note that claim 14 which depends only from claim 1 merely lists different kinds of *Rhodophyta* used in the method of claim 1 but, as Applicants understand it, each of the listed kinds (i.e., species) of *Rhodophyta* do not differentiate the concept of the method of claim 1, i.e., they all directed to fabricating pulp using the same base material (i.e., *Rhodophyta*).

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that (1) all of the claims are properly presented in the same application; (2) undue diverse searching should not be required; and (3) all claims should be examined together. For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the election requirement should be withdrawn and an action on the merits of all the originally presented claims is respectfully solicited.

If any issues exists, or if the Examiner has any suggestions for expediting allowance of the application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

¹ Page 5 of the Office Action.

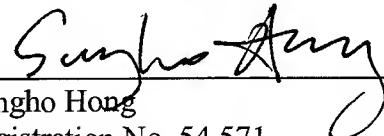
AUTHORIZATION

No petitions or additional fees are believed due for this amendment and/or any accompanying submissions. However, to the extent that any additional fees and/or petition is required, including a petition for extension of time, Applicants hereby petition the Commissioner to grant such petition, and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees, including any fees which may be required for such petition, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-4827 (Order No.1004502.001US). A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: June 4, 2009

By: _____


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